

UPIP22

(MIDEAST)

SUEZ CANAL (UPI) -- THE UNITED STATES PUT AIRMEN AND GROUND TROOPS ON ALERT AT HOME AND AT SOME OVERSEAS BASES TODAY APPARENTLY AS A PRECAUTION AND A DIPLOMATIC CARD IN THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS. ADMINISTRATION SOURCES SAID IT HAD URGED RUSSIA NOT TO SEND FORCES TO POLICE THE CEASE-FIRE AS REQUESTED BY EGYPT.

ISRAEL AND EGYPT BOTH REPORTED SPORADIC CLASHES ALONG THE SUEZ CANAL, BUT THE CEASE-FIRE SPONSORED BY THE TWO SUPERPOWERS APPEARED TO BE HOLDING AGAIN TODAY.

SOME PENTAGON SOURCES SAID THE ALERT FOLLOWED NOTIFICATION BY MOSCOW TO THE UNITED STATES THAT IT MIGHT SEND TROOPS TO THE MIDEAST TO HELP POLICE THE SHAKY TRUCE AS REQUESTED BY EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT ANWAR SADAT. THE UNITED STATES REFUSED SADAT'S REQUEST.

SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY KISSINGER MET FAR INTO THE NIGHT WITH SOVIET AMBASSADOR ANATOLY DOBRYNIN. INFORMED SOURCES SAID KISSINGER TOLD HIM "IT WOULD NOT BE A WISE" MOVE FOR THE SOVIET UNION TO SEND TROOPS TO THE MIDDLE EAST.

A DEFENSE DEPARTMENT SOURCE SAID THE ALERT WAS "PURELY PRECAUTIONARY AND A ROUTINE THING TO DO IN A SITUATION LIKE THIS." HE DID NOT EXPLAIN, HOWEVER, WHAT "THE SITUATION" WAS.

PENTAGON SOURCES SAID THE ALERT INCLUDED THE 82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION AT FT. BRAGG, N.C., AS WELL AS U.S. "QUICK REACTION TEAMS" AT BASES IN EUROPE.

UPI 12-25 09:00 APT

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RNR59

LEADALL MIDEAST

BY REUTER

(UNDATED)---THE UNITED STATES TODAY (THURSDAY) PUT ITS MILITARY FORCES -- INCLUDING MISSILE BASES -- ON ALERT THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AMID SIGNS THAT THE RUSSIANS MIGHT BE MOVING TROOPS TO THE MIDDLE EAST TO POLICE THE ARAB-ISRAELI CEASEFIRE.

THE ALERT, WHICH ALSO INCLUDED THE STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND --PRINCIPLE NUCLEAR DETERRENT FORCE OF THE UNITED STATES -- WAS THE MOST SERIOUS SINCE THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS OF 1962.

IT WAS SOUNDED AS URGENT MOVES TO TURN THE FRAGILE MIDDLE ARAB-ISRAELI CEASEFIRE INTO A MORE DURABLE PEACE WERE UNDER WAY IN THE UNITED NATIONS.

BUT THOUGH THE GUNS HAD FALLEN SILENT ON THE DEVASTATED Golan HEIGHTS BATTLE LINES, THE EGYPTIANS CLAIMED THAT FIGHTING WAS STILL RAGING EARLY THURSDAY ON THE SUEZ FRONT IN DEFIANCE OF SECURITY COUNCIL CEASEFIRE CALLS.

THE U.N. PEACE-SEEKING MOVES CAME EARLY THURSDAY WITH A FORMAL CALL FROM EIGHT NON-ALIGNED MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL FOR THE IMMEDIATE CREATION OF A PEACE FORCE TO KEEP THE WARRING SIDES APART.

THEIR DRAFT RESOLUTION ALSO REQUESTED SECRETARY GENERAL KURT WALDHEIM TO REPORT WITHIN 24 HOURS ON STEPS TO ORGANIZE SUCH A FORCE.

EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MOHAMED HASSAN EL-ZAYYAT HAD TOLD THE SECURITY COUNCIL THAT ISRAELI LASER-GUIDED MISSILES AND NAPALM "ARE RIGHT NOW BEING USED AGAINST OUR FORCES AND OUR CITIZENS IN THE TOWN OF SUEZ."

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